

Eagle Point Nature News

Adventure Awaits....

www.epbrparkscouncil.org



March, 2021



Signs of Spring Edition

Kathy Schwengler, Education & Outreach Coordinator,
Eagle Point-Blue Rapids Parks Council

"In the spring, at the end of the day, you should smell like dirt." Margaret Atwood

The Staff at Eagle Point-Blue Rapids Parks Council are excited about spring! After a busy winter of planning and winter programming, we can't wait to explore spring and summer activities with kids, families and adults through our regular and new programs here at the Parks Council.

We've got something for everyone - from Trail Running Workshops to Citizen Science to Camping 101 and even our first ever Eagle Trail Triple Virtual Race Series. Interested in Environmental and Outdoor Education for Kids & Youth? Download our catalog at www.epbrparkscouncil.org. Interested in upcoming events? Visit www.epbrparkscouncil.org/events/ for ways to get outside.

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UPCOMING EVENTS IN OUR PARKS

Signs of
SPRING
SCAVENGER HUNT
April 2 to 11
ROTARY PEMBINA NORDIC COMMUNITY TRAILS SOUTH
Eagle Point Provincial Park, Drayton Valley, AB

EAGLE POINT FIT TRIP

TRAIL RUNNING CAMP

APRIL 23 - 25, 2021

Group Trail Runs, Keys to Injury Prevention, Yoga, Pilates for Runners, Sports Nutrition talk, Cross Training Sessions, and More!!!!

EAGLE POINT-BLUE RAPIDS
PARKS COUNCIL presents

GLOBAL
BIG DAY*
8 MAY 2021

CAMPING 101

FIRE STARTING, TENTS AND SLEEP SYSTEMS, CAMP STOVES, CAMP COOKING, DRINKING WATER, & HOW TO POOP IN THE WOODS ALONG WITH OTHER ESSENTIAL SKILLS!

Eagle Point-Blue Rapids Parks Council
presents

The EAGLE Trail Triple

VIRTUAL TRAIL SERIES FEATURING
MAY, JUNE & SEPTEMBER RACES

OPEN TO ALL AGES AND ABILITIES!

EAGLE POINT-BLUE RAPIDS
PARKS COUNCIL presents

EAGLE POINT GUARDIANS OF THE PARK SUMMER DAY CAMP 2021

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10 SPRING ACTIVITIES FOR THE ENTIRE FAMILY!

Spring is here! So many ways to enjoy it!

1. BUILD AND TEST PUDDLE RAFTS



Spring isn't spring without some puddles to play in! Watch our **PUDDLE RAFTS** **YouTube video** for ideas on how to build 3 kinds of puddle rafts, or get inspired to test your own ideas. Kids can experiment with different materials buoyancy - wood, bottle caps, plastic, cardboard, etc. Decorate your rafts with feathers or leaves or home made flags.

2. BUILD A BIRD HOUSE



Many birds who return to Alberta for the spring nesting season appreciate bird houses! Tree swallows, purple martins, bluebirds, wrens - even some species of ducks will make use of a man-made birdhouse. Visit [Ellis Bird Farm](#) to download bird house plans or purchase a bird house kit. Remember that the size of the entrance hole will invite certain birds to enter the nest box.

3. TALK AN EVENING STROLL

Spring means longer daylight hours and warmer weather! Enjoy Alberta's spectacular sunsets & spring evenings by taking the family out for an evening stroll. Remember to dress properly and make sure you've got rubber boots!

4. BUILD A HOME MADE RAIN GAUGE



A home made rain gauge can help kids make a connection to the outdoors every day. Building their own rain gauge creates a way for kids to be involved in the process from start to finish, too. Keep a calendar where kids can record the rainfall over the spring, summer and fall. With a few materials most families can find around the house and the instructions at [Environment Canada](#), you'll have some budding weather enthusiasts in no time.

5. FLY A KITE!

Take advantage of spring breezes with a kite. Kids can learn about weather and physics while honing their hand-eye coordination! Just find a big field or park where there are no overhead power lines so everyone can be safe while enjoying this old fashioned outdoor hobby. Check out [My Best Kite](#) and build some basic kites at home!

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6. START YOUR OWN NATURE JOURNAL

Nature Journals are a great way to form a deeper, more personal connection to our natural world and can help relieve anxiety and stress while developing our senses. You can use a lined or plain notebook or [download our free My Nature Journal](#). Print off the booklet or just the pages that inspire you.

7. START SOME SEEDS INDOORS



Some of our favourite garden flowers and vegetables need to be started indoors to mature in our short growing season. Marigolds, pansies, tomatoes, peppers, herbs - try them all or just try one.

With just a packet of seeds, some potting soil and some small containers, families can witness the miracle of germination and plant growth! Start your plant indoors and move outside into a larger pot or garden bed when frost danger is over. Plants have varying starting times and needs for light & humidity. Follow directions on the seed packet for best results!

8. GO BIRDING!



There is no better time than spring to take up the hobby of birding! Migrating birds return from their southern and coastal habitats from early March to mid May and we are wake to a morning chorus of robins, sparrows, warblers, black-birds and more! Get a Bird Identification book or app, consider buying a pair of binoculars, head out to your nearest trail or wetlands, park or backyard. Get inspired by participating in [Global Big Day on May 8/2021](#).

9. MAKE HOME MADE WIND CHIMES



Spring can be windy! Why not build a whimsical wind chime to capture the energy of wind and turn it to sound?

You will need a top made from a sturdy material - wood or metal. Your top can be a round disc, a ring or even a long piece of driftwood. Attach a hook or ring to the top piece from which you can hang your chime. Choose the material you wish to dangle below. These materials are what makes noise and can be anything from beads or sea shells to hollow pipes to keys to old cutlery to varying lengths of bamboo to tree cookies. Let your imagination dictate how your finished product looks!

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10. MAKE HOME MADE EGG DYES!



Many vegetables and spices can yield some amazing colours for your Easter Eggs! Red cabbage, blueberry juice, turmeric* powder, onion skins, spinach, avocado pits!

Directions: For vegetables or roughage dye sources:

Chop your dye source into small to medium pieces. Add 1½ to 2 cups of dye source (cabbage, onion skins, avocado pits, spinach, forest floor items). Add 2 cups of water. Bring mixture to a boil and simmer for 20 minutes to one hour. Strain mixture through a sieve or cheese cloth to separate liquid from solids. Cool. While your dye is cooling, boil white eggs until hard boiled. Pour your dye into a clear jar or tall glass, add 1 to 2 tBsp vinegar, stir, then add a boiled egg. The longer you leave the egg in the dye water, the darker or more vibrant the egg shell will get.

- Beets = pink
- Red Cabbage = Add vinegar to make pink dye. Add baking soda to make a blue dye.
- Brown Onion Skins = rust colour
- Avocado Pits = red
- Blueberries = greyish blue
- Spinach = Khaki green
- *Turmeric powder = Yellow (Add 2 tBsp powder to 1 1/2 c boiling water, cool & add 1 tBsp vinegar)



Forest Floor Dye - Humans have been using items from the forest to dye fibres like wool for thousands of years. For this issue, we decided to harvest some forest floor bits to make an experimental egg dye. We did not harvest living plants, but did remove a few leaves.

Here's the Forest Floor Mix we used: spruce & pine needles, pine cones, shelf fungi, purple bunchberry leaves, brown fern fronds, grass, cedar twigs, Labrador Tea leaves, leaf litter, moss, old man's beard picked off the ground. We simmered the water/forest floor mix for 1 hour, then strained it, cooled it, poured it into a mason jar and added a tablespoon of vinegar before adding a hard boiled egg.

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Thinking about venturing into the wilderness this spring? Whether you're a new visitor or not, familiarize yourself with [Leave No Trace](#) Seven Principles for Outdoor Ethics.

- ◆ Plan Ahead and Prepare
- ◆ Travel & Camp on Durable Surfaces
- ◆ Dispose of Waste Properly
- ◆ Leave What You Find
- ◆ Minimize Campfire Impacts
- ◆ Respect Wildlife
- ◆ Be Considerate of Others



Which animal made this track in the mud?

- a. Deer
- b. Chickadee
- c. Otter
- d. Great Horned Owl

d. great horned owl

Heading out to our two Parks this spring? Show us what you love about our Parks with your photographs by tagging us at [#iloveEPBRParks](#)





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Questions or Suggestions?

Contact:

Eagle Point-Blue Rapids Parks Council

Sandra Bannard,
Executive Director
sandra@epbrparkscouncil.org

Kathy Schwengler,
Education & Outreach Coordinator
outreach@epbrparkscouncil.org

Erin Klatt
Parks Interpretor & Education Assistant
education@epbrparkscouncil.org

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DON'T MISS OUR NEXT ISSUE!**

ENJOY THESE INFORMATIVE LINKS!

- ❖ **LEAVE NO TRACE** Outdoor recreation comes with responsibility. Learn what's expected of outdoor enthusiasts.
- ❖ **Using Clouds to Predict the Weather.** Kids can be weather forecasters with this simple guide to clouds.
- ❖ **Birds of Alberta: Migration Date Guide** When can you expect to see your first robin? your first tree swallow? your first osprey?
- ❖ **The Painted Rock:** The Kindness-Spreading Treasure Hunt for Kids & Families.
- ❖ Remember **HINTERLANDS WHO'S WHO?** They've got updated and interactive stuff for kids who like animals and nature on The Wild Gang.
- ❖ What is a **VERNAL EQUINOX?** Watch this quick National Geographic video to find out.

Eagle Point-Blue Rapids Parks Council thanks our supporters for their continued support during these challenging times! Our featured supporter of the week is **Miller's Animal Control Management** for their generous donation of furs to our Furs, Antlers & Skulls program.

